

REMARKS

As a preliminary matter, only claims 1 and 3 of the present invention stand rejected, and only claim 2 of the present invention stands objected to for being dependent on a rejected base claim. Accordingly, Applicants have amended claim 2 to be rewritten in independent form, and cancelled claims 1 and 3, rendering all rejections thereto now moot.

As a second preliminary matter, with respect to the Examiner's comments regarding the August 26, 2003, Information Disclosure Statement, Applicants submit that the Information Disclosure Statement fully complied with 37 C.F.R. 1.98(a)(2). Applicants also note that the Examiner has both indicated that no copies of the documents listed were provided, but also that at least translated Abstracts were provided. Applicants are unable to understand these apparently conflicting statements.

Applicants assume from the Examiner's statements that he did receive the translated abstracts of the documents provided, and respectfully point out that Applicants are not automatically required to translate the entire document from a foreign language reference, but instead may submit translated Abstracts of the documents only. If the Examiner means to request from Applicants the full translation of the entire documents that were previously submitted, he may make such a request but he should still give consideration to the proper Information Disclosure Statement that was previously submitted, even if only acknowledging that he has only considered the translated Abstract. As a courtesy, Applicants enclose another copy of the documents that were

submitted with the Information Disclosure Statement on August 26, 2003, noting for the record that the translation indicated on Form PTO-1449 refers to the Abstract of each document.

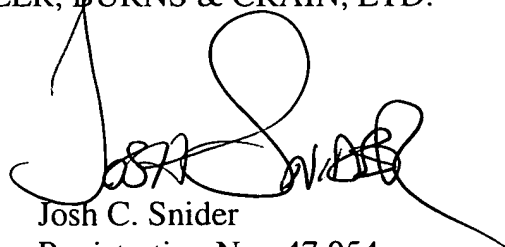
New claim 17 has been added to recite another combination of features of the present invention. Consideration on the merits and allowance are respectfully requested. More specifically, new claim 17 recites several similar features to cancelled claims 1 and 3 of the present invention, but also recites new configurations and features that Applicants submit more clearly distinguish this claim over the cited prior art references of record.

For all of the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that this Application, including claims 2, 4-12, and 17, is in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney should he find that any further issues related to patentability exist.

Respectfully submitted,

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